

Message Text

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43

ACTION AF-08

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FM AMEMBASY YAOUNDE

TO AMEMBASSY LAGOS

INFO AMCONSUL IBADAN

AMCONSUL KADUNA

SECSTATE WASHDC 9585

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE YAOUNDE 3346

1. DURING INFREQUENT OCCASIONS WHEN NIGERIAN AMBASSADOR MUHAMMAD SANI PRESENT YAOUNDE AND CONVERSATIONS HIS DEPUTY ALHIJI WAZIRI LAMIMO, ON BASIS MY THREE YEAR SERVICE AND FRIENDSHIP CURRENT NIGERIAN LEADERS, WE HAVE TALKED ABOUT FUTURE COURSE NIGERIAN EVENTS. AT DIPLOMATIC FUNCTION EVENING 9/9, SANI, UNCHARACTERISTICALLY FOR NORTHERNER, STARTED EXPOUNDING NIGERIAN POLITICS. HE WAS ALSO SEEN FOR FIRST TIME WEARING WESTERN BUSINESS SUIT WITH NECKTIE. THIS MUST MEAN SOMETHING FOR MOSLEM IN RHAMADAN BUT UNSURE SIGNIFICANCE THIS SIGNAL.

2. SANI SAID OBASANJO HAD CALLED DIPLOMATS HOME AND TOLD THEM THEY MUST BE MORE AGGRESSIVE. HE INCREDULOUS THAT PROFESSIONAL DIPLOMATS INSTRUCTED BY CHIEF OF STATE TO BE MORE AGGRESSIVE.

3. ON RETURN TO BARRACKS: SANI SAID PRESENT SMC COLLEGIUM AND THAT OBASANJO FIRST AMONG EQUALS. HE THOUGHT OBASANJO POSITION ON MILITARY RETURN BARRACKS SHARED BY OTHER MEMBERS SMC, BUT CONSENSUS THAT RETURN WILL NOT TAKE PLACE BEFORE SMC IN AGREEMENT THAT CONDITIONS FOR RETURN CIVILIAN RULE MET. HE DID NOT THINK OBASANJO WOULD PRECIPITATE CRISIS BY DEMANDING PREMATURE RETURN BEFORE PROGRAM COMPLETED.

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4. ON FUTURE POLITICAL LEADERS, SANI SAID OLD-LINE POLITICIANS (I SPECIFICALLY MENTIONED AWO AND INURA WADA) WERE THROUGH. HE SCORNFULLY SAID "YOU FOREIGNERS LOOK AT PERSONALITIES AND NOT MOVEMENTS." HE OBSERVED THAT NEW POLITICIANS WHO WOULD INHERIT MILITARY RULE ARE PRESENTLY CIVIL SERVANTS, SUCCESSFUL BUSINESSMEN AND AMBITIOUS SOLIDERS AND THEY ARE ALREADY KNOWN BY NIGERIAN ELITES.
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